

- 5 -

We Claim:

1. An apparatus for playback of multi-channel sound signals having spatial characteristics, said apparatus comprising:

5 a decoder for converting said multi-channel sound signals into a series of speaker outputs for virtual speakers placed in pre-determined positions around a listener;

a single speaker cabinet;

10 a multiplicity of speaker elements arranged around said cabinet, said speaker elements coupled with predetermined ones of said series of speaker outputs so as to project their acoustic output substantially in the radial direction that a virtual speaker would be placed around said cabinet if said cabinet were said listener.

2. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said multi-channel sound signals comprise B-format signals.

3. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said speaker cabinet is mounted centrally on a roof in a room.

20 4. A method for playback of multi-channel sound signals having spatial characteristics on a speaker arrangement, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) decoding said signals for a set of virtual speakers placed around a listener so as to produce a set of
25 decoded speaker signals; and

(b) projecting said set of decoded speaker signals from a series of closely clustered speakers with each of said decoded speaker signals being projected in a direction of a corresponding virtual speaker located around
30 said cluster.

5. A method as claimed in claim 4 wherein said multi-channel sound signals comprise B-format signals.